

**INDIANA STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
INDIANAPOLIS, IN**

DATE: December 17, 2007

TO: All Local Health Departments
Attn: Chief Food Specialist

FROM: A. Scott Gilliam, MBA, CFSP
Manager, Food Protection Program

SUBJECT: Swad Brand Sindoor Advisory

Effectiveness audits have been done at the three stores that received the product in Indianapolis and Greenwood, Indiana. All packages have been pulled and sent back to the distributor. Product was not found on shelf.

FDA NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release: Dec. 15, 2007
Media Inquiries: Brad A. Swezey, 301-827-6242, brad.swezey@fda.hhs.gov
Consumer Inquiries: 888-INFO-FDA

FDA Warns Consumers Not to Use Swad Brand Sindoor: Product Contains High Levels of Lead
Orange or red powder that is applied to face or scalp: not intended for food use

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration is warning consumers not to use 3.5 oz. packages of Swad brand sindoor, an orange or red powder used in some traditional South Asian Pacific ceremonies that is applied to the face or scalp, imported by Raja Foods LLC of Skokie, Illinois because the product contains high levels of lead. Although the product was not intended to be sold for food use, its labeling is confusing and implies that it may be used as food. The Illinois Department of Public Health has confirmed two cases of lead poisoning in consumers who used the product as an ingredient in home cooked meals. Other uses of the product, including as a cosmetic, can also be dangerous due to the high lead levels.

Lead can be toxic to all humans but due to the risks it poses to a developing nervous system, women of childbearing age, pregnant women and their unborn children, and young children should be especially cautious and limit their exposure to lead. Symptoms of lead toxicity include: stomach aches, colic, nausea, vomiting, abnormal irritability, and insomnia. However, people with lead in their blood often do not exhibit symptoms. Permanent damage to the central nervous system from

lead exposure can result in learning difficulties in school children as well as cause other long-term health problems such as kidney disease. Anyone who has consumed this product should consult his or her health care provider immediately.

At least 280 packages of Sindoor were distributed to grocery stores that specialize in foods from India in Colorado, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, New York, Ohio, Oregon, Tennessee, Texas, Washington, and Wisconsin.

The front label of the bag states "SWAD BEST TASTE IN TOWN SINDOOR", "FOR RECIPE IDEAS VISIT OUR WEBSITE: WWW.RAJAFOODS.COM", and "PRODUCT OF INDIA." The back label states "Imported and Distributed by: Raja Foods, 8110, N. St. Louis Avenue, Skokie, ILL 60076", with a UPC of 0 51179 42236 0 and may have a sticker stating "NONEDIBLE".

Packages of Sindoor can be returned to the place of purchase for a full refund. Consumers with questions may contact the company at 1-800-800-7923 x 2860.

Consumers should report adverse events related to this product to MedWatch, the FDA's voluntary reporting program: www.fda.gov/medwatch/report.htm, 800-332-1088, fax: 800-332-0178, mail: MedWatch, Food and Drug Administration, 5600 Fishers Lane, Rockville, MD 20852-9787.
